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AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

VOLUME 4 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, DECEMBER, 1922 NUMBER 12

DECEMBER MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday evening, 14th inst., at eight o'clock, in the Technical Room of the Public Library, corner McAllister and Larkin Sts. Take elevator to third floor. Car lines No. 5 or No. 19.

Miss Catharine Flinn will read a paper on "Bird Notes in Yana Texts," interpreting certain conceptions of this tribe of Indians which formerly inhabited the district between the Pit river in Shasta County and Deer creek, Tehama County, and was decimated in a massacre by miners in 1864.

Mrs. A. S. Kibbe will recount experiences in "Raising an Anna Hummer."

Visitors will be made welcome.

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DECEMBER FIELD TRIP will be taken to Golden Gate Park on Sunday, December 17th. Meet at 43d Avenue entrance on Fulton Street at 9:30 a. m. Take McAllister car No. 5, "Beach" sign. Bring lunch.

The usual route will be followed, ending at the Japanese tea garden, where lunch will be eaten in time for those so disposed to attend the lecture at the Academy of Sciences, by Mlle. Jehanne Bietry, on "Indo-China". Leader, Mr. Carl R. Smith.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING: The seventieth regular meeting of the Association was held on November 9th, in the Technical Room of the San Francisco Public Library, with President Kibbe in the chair; Miss Isabel Ames, Secretary; eleven members and eight guests in attendance.

The principal business of the evening had to do with the question of the Public Shooting Ground—Game Refuge Bill and the imminent resumption of its consideration by Congress. Details of the proposed bill were given and arguments in its favor quoted. The meeting unanimously adopted a resolution endorsing the bill and requesting the Corresponding Secretary to transmit a copy of the resolution to all Senators and Representatives in Congress from California and neighboring States.

Following the business session, Miss Loriol M. V. Lamoureux recounted interesting events in her recent trip across the continent with her robin "Cheer". In contrast with the first journey westward, Cheer this time rode openly in a Pullman as a passenger with a permit if not a passage ticket.

The White House was visited and numerous large meetings were attended, where it was demonstrated that a robin could be liberated amid throngs of strangers and then called back to his cage.

In Salt Lake City, Cheer acquired a rival in the form of a wounded magpie with a broken leg, but it developed that, in robin psychology, it was one thing to be pleasant to various human visitors but quite another to welcome a big alien to the family circle. The magpie has been nursed back to health, but its leg had to be amputated and efforts are now being made to furnish it with a workable artificial substitute, of which we may hope to hear more hereafter.

Curses, like bad chickens, come home to roost, and Cheer has discovered that the other robins at his Berkeley home considered *him* one too many when he returned from his travels, so the bird family now requires three separate apartments, instead of one. The robins may become reconciled again, but it is an open question whether the magpie will be permitted to share their quarters with them.

Miss Lamoureux's talk was enjoyed, as usual, by all present.

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## ANSERINE INTELLIGENCE

Extract from an article by Tom A. Marshall, in *The Sportsmen's Review*, Vol. LXII. No. 16. October 21, 1922.

Three animals on special occasions are given to hissing. The wily goose, in his effort to put over a *bluff;* the crawling serpent, attempting to frighten instead of *striking;* the disgruntled genus homo, resenting statements publicly made which do not coincide with his convictions or beliefs. Hissing is an evidence of neglect in culture, not an indication of limited intelligence.

Have you attempted to encompass the capture or killing of geese by matching wits with them? Have you noticed the accurate spacing of birds and V-shaped formation of flocks as they follow their leader, journeying along the uncharted and invisible path during the flight to or from the northland? Have you noted their extreme caution when circling and carefully studying of conditions and environments before alighting, watching for concealed dangers, either aquatic or terrestrial? Once the flock is at rest, sentinels walk or swim out from the main flock, take their posts of observation, neither sleeping nor feeding during the period they are performing sentinel duty. Watch their military tactics. If real or imagined danger presents itself, the feathered sentinel immediately turns in a low penetrating alarm signal. Every member of the flock stands at attention awaiting the "a-wing" command of their superior officer, which he sounds when danger suspicions are confirmed, or "at rest", which is given when fear is dispelled. The outside guard again goes on watch.

Approach, if you will, the nest or young of a mother goose. Watch her intelligent efforts to mislead or entice you away, flapping off with an apparently broken wing. Failing in that effort to get you to follow, she will return, hissing out her bluff, or may possibly attack you with bill or wings.

Having observed the enumerated goose peculiarities, all indicative of unusual intelligence, then you hear geese mentioned as the last word in the

category of non-intelligence. You well know the application is malapropos and that the person making it should supplant the goose in the procession of ignorance. The wild turkey is the one game bird ranking the goose in wisdom.

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## MIGRATION NOTES AND QUERIES

The month of March brings on the mighty migration rush from south to north and west to east. It fills certain species of the feathered horde with a great unrest, and each returning March gives rise to many questions in the mind of the writer. Will they ever be solved? It is to be hoped that banding will eventually bring the answers.

In the early part of this month the robin and his near relative, the varied thrush appear in numbers in the Bay district. These birds, I believe, all go north along the Coast Range to nest; some, at least, by way of the coast line, for I found them plentiful at Fort Bragg on March 10th. On the trip from Willits to Fort Bragg, through the mountains, few robins were in evidence, but from Sausalito northerly through the valleys of the Russian and Eel rivers they were present in countless numbers. It is evident that they follow the low passes, avoiding the heavy timber which at this time of year affords little food.

The high ridges were covered with snow, which seemed to call a temporary halt in the northward movement, and robins were present in great numbers. I estimated two thousand on the ridge near Willetts. Through the whole district, the Sierra juncos were found in even greater numbers than the robins.

In May, I found the bi-colored redwing as far north as the south line of Del Norte County, but not a female of this species was to be seen. From the 20th to the 23d of the month, at Placerville, Auburn, Nevada City and Oroville, in the Sierra foothills, the west to east movement of the robins and juncos was in evidence, but not nearly so pronounced as along the Coast Range, owing probably to the flight lines being more numerous. On the east side of the Coast Range, which is comparatively arid and has few rivers, Sierra juncos were absent and robins I found only in the Capay valley. This is one of the few fertile valleys on the eastern side of the range. It is about twenty miles long and from one to two miles wide, opening out into the great Sacramento valley at one end and closed at the Ramsey end by the abruptly rising mountain side. On either side of the valley the mountain slopes support a scattered growth of digger pines, which show the peculiar trait of following the water courses to the floor of the valley and along the left side of Cache creek, which drains the valley. In the very creek bottom, along with Fremont cottonwoods and alders, the digger pine reaches a size that I have never seen elsewhere.

In the southern part of the Sacramento valley and the northern part of the San Joaquin valley, around April 1st, I observed immense flocks of female redwings, northward bound, although the male birds had evidently arrived there some days earlier and had scattered over the nesting ground. It was plain that this particular lot of females was routed north, as the flocks did not show a single male. The question presents itself,—Do the male redwings know that a like number of females will follow them to a given nesting ground? On visiting the nesting areas, one finds only mated birds. If a

hundred males are killed during migration, what becomes of the surplus females?

Why do the robins and juncos crowd into dense masses to negotiate the narrow, canyon-like, passes of Mendocino and Humboldt Counties, where food must be almost nil at that time of the year, when they could travel by way of the broad Sacramento valley, amid a greater abundance of food, and reach the nesting grounds by only a short flight across the low Coast Range? The elevation cannot be the deciding obstacle, for numbers of these species nest at 7,000 feet.

On August 2d, 1920, I found a female redwing sitting on four eggs at an altitude of 8,500 feet. No others of this species were encountered for miles around, nor have I ever seen another blackbird in this location during the three years I have visited the district.

CARL R. SMITH.

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NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP was taken on Sunday, November 12th, to the University Campus at Berkeley. Members present were: Mesdemoiselles Ames, Ayer, Cheeseman, Flynn, Fritts, King, Paroni and Sterne; Mesdames Kelly, Kibbe and Thomas; Messrs. Bourne, More, Rapp and Thomas. As guests came Misses Borden, Bullard, Jacobson and Merriweather; Mr. and Mrs. Merriweather; Mrs. Megenity, Dr. T. W. Cook; Messrs. L. A. Elmore, A. N. Myer, I. M. Parry and Ananda Jacobs. Fifteen members and twelve guests.

On the Bay and along the Key mole, Miss Ames noted western grebe, loon, western, California and Bonaparte gulls; Brandt cormorant, sandpipers and pipit.

The route on the campus followed the general trend of Strawberry creek, beginning at Centre St. entrance, passing the Le Conte oak; thence northward across the old foot-ball field to Hilgard Hall and along the east side of the Hall, through the olive orchard to President Barrow's house. Most of the birds were seen in the olive orchard. Then we walked southward again and through the botanical gardens, past the Campanile to Faculty Glade; thence eastward along the north side of Strawberry creek to the ranch beyond the dairy, returning by way of the big "C."

Birds seen on the campus were: Gull, quail, Cooper, re-tailed and sparrow hawks; flicker, Anna hummer, black phoebe, coast and California jays; green-backed goldfinch, intermediate, Nuttall and golden-crowned sparrows; junco, song sparrow, San Francisco and California towhees; Audubon and Townsend warblers, Vigors wren, Sierra creeper and red-breasted nuthatch; titmouse, bush and wren tits, golden-crowned and ruby-crowned kinglets; hermit thrush, robin and varied thrush. Thirty eight species in all.

C. A. PARONI.


## AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

FOR THE STUDY AND THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

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Meets second Thursday of each month, at 8:00 p.m., in Assembly Hall of San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Streets.

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